Coordinated yield trials for multilocation testing before it is released to the farmers for commercial cultivation.

(d) Depending upon the performance of the hybrid under multi-location trials, it would be available for commercial cultivation within 3 to 4 years.

Development of horticulture

2789. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the productivity and availability of horticulture produce increase dramatically over the last decade due to investment made during the Eighth and Ninth Five Year Plans;

(b) if so, whether the experts have felt that much more needs to be done to improve the quantity and competitiveness of the horticultural products;

(c) whether horticulture has shown the best option during the past, for diversification of agriculture, generation of more employment opportunities and higher returns per unit of land; and

(d) if so, whether, in view thereof, any concrete plans are being worked out to develop horticulture in the Tenth Five Year Plan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir. The production of horticultural produce increased from 96.6 million tonnes in 1991-92 to 149.2 million tonnes in 1999-2000 and the productivity from 7.5 tonnes/ha. to 9.8 tonnes/ha. during the same period.

(b) to (d) Over the years, the horticulture sector has established its importance as an economically viable alternative in the strategy for diversification of Indian Agriculture because of its potential to increase productivity of land, generate higher income per unit of land, provide nutritional security, generate employment, broaden industrial base and improve exports. Accordingly the Government envisages to provide a boost for all-round development of horticulture during the Tenth Five Year Plan. Apart from the

on going programmes, new schemes on (i) Hi-tech horticulture through Precision Farming and (ii) Development of horticulture through Technological interventions are contemplated during the Tenth Plan.

Assistance to States under NAIS

†2790. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have reviewed implementation of crop insurance scheme in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the crops included under the National Agricultural Insurance Scheme;

(d) whether some State Governments have sought Central assistance for implementation of insurance scheme for the crops which have not been covered under insurance schemes, so far; and

(e) if so, the steps proposed to be taken in response to their demand?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) and (b) As per the provision of the National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (NAIS) and on the basis of suggestions and feedback received from the States/farming communities, review of NAIS on various counts like maintenance of Crops Fund, reduction in the unit area of insurance to Gram Panchayat level, limiting the sum insured, premia subsidy to small and marginal farmers, coverage of perennial crops etc., is under process.

(c) The scheme covers all the food crops (cereals, millets and pulses), oilseeds and annual commercial/horticultural crops, in respect of which past yield data is available for adequate number of years and the State Governments/U.Ts. have the ability to conduct

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.